

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100000762

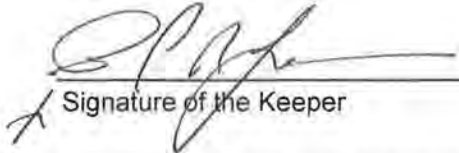
Date Listed: 3/20/2017

Property Name: ZUMBROTA (yacht)

County: Los Angeles

State: CA

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation


Signature of the Keeper

3/20/2017
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Historic Name:

The Historic Name/Listing Name is revised to read: ZUMBROTA (yacht)
[This conforms to the National Register's standardized conventions for vessel names.]

SHPO Certification:

This confirms that the documentation was submitted to the Keeper as a *nomination*, that *meets* the National Register Criteria, as noted in the state correspondence. [The nomination form certification blanks were originally left incomplete.]

The CALIFORNIA SHPO was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-762

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Zumbrota
Other names/site number: YP 595; Vellron
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Hornblower Cruises and Events; 13755 Fiji Way
City or town: Marina del Rey State: CA County: Los Angeles
Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination ~~request for determination of eligibility~~ meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
___ A ___ B X C ___ D

	<u>1/20/17</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>for California State Historic Preservation Officer</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

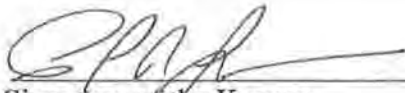
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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

3/20/2017
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
<u>1</u>	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: water-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: water-related

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Yacht

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: wood hull and decking

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Zumbrota (Vessel No. 217044) is a private charter vessel moored at Fisherman's Village in Marina del Rey, California, a seaside community with 19 marinas housing approximately 6,500 boats. *Zumbrota* was constructed in 1918 as a wooden-hulled shallow range passenger vessel by Charles L. Seabury Co. and Gas Engine & Power Co., Consolidated (later Consolidated Shipbuilding Corp.) of Morris Heights, NY. Approximately 95 feet in length, she features a fantail stern, three decks and finishes of teak or mahogany, and is powered by twin 195-horsepower diesel engines. She served as a pleasure yacht under several owners until 1942, when she transitioned briefly to a military vessel and subsequently to a fishing charter vessel. *Zumbrota* was converted back to a pleasure craft in the mid-1970s and was renovated twice in the 1970s and '80s. As part of these renovations, her aft deck was enclosed, and a sundeck added aft of the bridge. Additionally, her lower staterooms were partially dismantled and a new, full service galley was added to the main deck to accommodate the large parties she now hosts.

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Narrative Description

Exterior

Zumbrota is a shallow range, twin-screw fantail yacht approximately 95 feet long (90 feet on the water-line), with a breadth of 18.1 feet and a hull depth of 8.4 feet. Registered at a gross tonnage of 91 and a net tonnage of 62, she is powered by twin, 195-horsepower diesel engines. These engines were installed during her use as a military vessel in the 1940s, replacing the original 150-horsepower twin engines that had a cruising speed of 12 miles/hour. Her hull is constructed of oak, while the deckhouse, bridge and lower deck rooms are primarily constructed of or finished with mahogany. Her hull has sixteen round, painted brass portholes and a wooden rubrail on either side, while the anchor is located on the port bow. *Zumbrota* retains a plumb bow and generally straight sheer. She has three decks: a flush main deck with galley and event space, a bridge deck with pilothouse and sundeck, and a lower deck with seating, a hold, an engine room and three heads.

Zumbrota's main deck features an original, semicircular mahogany deckhouse located forward amidships (see Photo 5); it formerly housed a dining room at the fore end (replaced by a small salon) and a smoking and music room in the after end (replaced by a galley). The deckhouse's rounded fore wall is fixed with ten mahogany encased windows that overlook the foredeck. Single, partially glazed mahogany doors located on either side grant access to the deckhouse interior from the foredeck. The deckhouse aft is now partially concealed by wall additions on either side of the ship. The walls have enclosed the vessel's aft deck, originally an open-air space sheltered by a canopy-like structure (see Figure 3), to create an enlarged deckhouse that is now a dining and event space. The new deckhouse walls are also of mahogany construction, matching that of the original deckhouse, and feature twelve bays on either side containing aluminum sliding windows; paired mahogany doors are located aft amidships in the fourth bay from the stern. To accommodate the new deckhouse, *Zumbrota's* hull has experienced some modifications, including the addition of a plank around the perimeter of the foredeck bulwarks (see Photo 4). The stern of the hull has also been raised and is now fitted with sliding windows.

Zumbrota's foredeck is planked with teak. The metal bow davit and mahogany hatch she was once fitted with have been removed. A metal bollard near the bow has been replaced by a wood bollard, while a mahogany bench located forward of the rounded deckhouse wall has been replaced with a new bench mimicking the rounded form. At the center of the wall above the bench is a brass bell reading "U.S. Army P285." Historic photos suggest that a canopy structure originally shaded the foredeck at some point during *Zumbrota's* use as a pleasure craft, as was common in turn-of-the-century pleasure yachts, but any hardware reflecting this structure has since been removed (see Figure 6). A safety railing comprising metal posts, two cable center rails and a mahogany grab rail now encircles the entirety of the foredeck, having historically stopped short of the bow.

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An enclosed bridge is located above the deckhouse aft and accessed by a starboard stair amidships. It was originally fitted with three stacked awning windows along the angled front wall, which have now been replaced by fixed windows. Located amidships, directly aft of the bridge, is the ship's smokestack, comprising a single exhaust funnel. Originally, a canopy-like structure covered the aft deck. This area has since been converted to a sundeck, supported by the walls of the renovated deckhouse. The sundeck encompasses the entirety of the boat aft of the bridge. To accommodate the sundeck addition, the smokestack was raised between five and six feet, approximately twice its original height; the original rim of the stack is still present. Though not constructed as a sail boat, *Zumbrota* also historically contained two vertical spars, located forward and abaft of the bridge.

Interior

Main Deck

Zumbrota's deckhouse is primarily accessed from her foredeck by a door on either side of the original deckhouse. Elements throughout include mahogany finishes, ceilings supported by small beams running the width of the ship, and non-original carpeting. The dining room originally located in the forward deckhouse now comprises a small salon (see Photo 6). At the center of the salon is a staircase leading to the forward lower deck, which historically housed a galley the full-width of the yacht and the crew's quarters. The staircase is fitted with non-original brass railings that connect to the forward galley wall.

Aft of the salon is the main galley, added to *Zumbrota* circa 2004 and accessed on either side via circulation corridors that lead to the aft event space (see Photo 8). On the galley's starboard side is a bar, slightly recessed within the galley space and open to the starboard circulation corridor and forward salon (see Photo 7). The bar is faced with original mahogany paneling, though it appears that its mahogany countertop is new, added during the addition of the bar in 1975. Along the outward rim of the countertop is a brass rail adjoined to the bar by decorative brass elephant heads. The galley is outfitted with new stainless steel equipment and cabinetry. It also contains saltillo tile soles and riveted plastic overhead panels. Immediately aft of the galley on the starboard side is a staircase leading to the pilothouse on the bridge deck (see Photo 9). This is presumably where the original deckhouse ended. The smokestack, projecting aft from the original deckhouse, has been enclosed and paneled with wallpaper.

The remainder of the main deck aft of the galley comprises a dining and event space (main salon), divided into two parts (see Photo 10). Built-in mahogany settees are located on either side of the space amidships and on the perimeter of the smokestack enclosure. Through the middle of the space are Douglas fir columns supporting a beam centered along the line of the keel; the ceiling retains the general configuration of that seen in the original deckhouse. Rounded brackets at the top of the columns support the center beam. Astarboard of the columns is a staircase with brass railings that leads to the lower aft deck.

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Aft amidships is a wood parquet floor the width of the ship that serves as a dance floor. Original mahogany or teak cleats can be seen along the perimeter of the dance floor. Located abaft of the main salon is an additional dining area, separated from the larger room by wooden bulkheads extending inward from either side of the stern hull (see Photo 11). An opening between the bulkheads, divided by a column, grants access between the two spaces. Each bulkhead contains one sliding aluminum window. The sliding plexiglass windows around the stern are delineated by heavy wooden piers that conform to the curved form of the yacht's fantail.

Lower Deck

The lower deck is split into three general parts: a forward seating area, an engine room and an aft seating area. The staircase from the forward salon on the main deck leads to the forward lower deck, which originally comprised a mahogany-finished galley (extending the full width of the vessel) and crew quarters, finished in white enamel with butternut trim. The forward lower deck has since been renovated so that none of the original spaces remain, though the butternut trim is still present along the overhead in many areas. The overhead is flush, with wood strips laid in the same pattern those on the main deck. Portholes throughout are painted white and recessed within the ship's hull, defined by mahogany trim. This portion of the deck is separated from the aft lower deck by the engine room, located amidships, and can only be accessed from the stairs in the forward salon.

At the base of the stairs is a small seating area with a built-in settee along the port side. On the starboard side is a small galley or service area, accessed via a paneled mahogany door; the galley is equipped with two stainless steel sinks, a refrigerator, and two portholes (see Photo 14). Soles comprise diamond tread plates while the overhead and hull walls are fixed with the same riveted plastic paneling seen in the main deck galley.

Aft of the small seating area and comprising *Zumbrota's* amidships is the engine room, protected by double steel watertight bulkheads (see Photo 15). It is accessed by a metal door behind a single mahogany door across from the staircase. Twin Gray Marine 195-horsepower diesel engines (added during World War II) are located at the center of the engine room; a date on the starboard engine head reads "7/13/1944." The port engine is now fitted with a Detroit Diesel engine head while the starboard engine retains its original cylinder head. Two additional generators have been added and are located on either side of the engine room just aft of the original engines. The engine room is fitted with metal soles and connections throughout.

Forward of the small seating area is a larger seating area, accessed by a paneled mahogany door located a port of the staircase (see Photo 12). A built-in settee continues along the port side. A vanity is built into the hull along the starboard side and features a mirror that projects out from the hull and is flush with the vanity (see Photo 13). Four portholes are located on either side of the hull, while the original butternut trim along the overhead retains diamond-shaped inlays, some of which are outfitted as vents. Moving forward through a mahogany

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louvered door is a small head featuring blue and cream-colored tile, mahogany trim and a brass sink. On either side of the head entry are small holds accessed by narrow, latticed screen doors.

The aft lower deck originally contained four staterooms, one of which ran the full width of the vessel, that were finished in mahogany and white enamel. Though the rooms and their configuration are no longer extant, the space retains mahogany and white enamel finishes. This area can only be accessed by the aft stairs on the main deck. A small seating area is outfitted with a built-in settee and contains two portholes (see Photo 16). Located astarboard of the stairs is a built-in coffee station. Two heads are located along the port side and accessed by louvered mahogany doors with a segmented arch and brass features (including signage and door handles), as well as non-original aluminum locks (see Photo 17). The heads have tile soles and mahogany finishes, which appear to be original along the hull but non-original on the sink and bulkheads. Portholes located within the head have been boarded.

A small hallway a part of the staircase leads to an aft hold (see Photo 18). Like other service areas on the boat, the storage room features non-original diamond tread plate soles and riveted plastic overhead panels. It also includes built-in cabinetry and a single stainless steel sink.

Bridge Deck

The upper bridge deck comprises the ship's pilothouse and an aft sundeck that was added circa 1975. Positioned directly above the galley, the pilothouse is accessed by a starboard stair amidships, fitted with a brass grab rail. The aft wall of the pilothouse was likely the original end of the deckhouse before the aft deck was enclosed. The bridge is entirely finished in mahogany and retains its original brass wheel, wood console and binnacle (see Photo 19). The overhead is planked teak supported by small beams, similar to that seen in the original deckhouse, and the sole is carpeted. A modern steel duct from the galley is located on the console's port side. The pilothouse has been modified to accommodate two single, partially glazed mahogany doors on the port side and one on the starboard side, granting access to the raised sundeck. The pilothouse is mounted with radar equipment and antennae.

Directly aft of the bridge is the original smokestack, which has been raised between five and six feet; the rim of the original smokestack remains extant (see Photo 21). On the smokestack's starboard side, attached to the pilothouse, is a small wooden hold. A large sundeck encompasses the remainder of the ship aft of the pilothouse (see Photo 20). It is characterized by wood decking finished with protective non-skid paint and a safety railing matching that of the ship's foredeck.

Integrity

The National Park Service (NPS) defines integrity as "the ability of a property to convey its significance." An historic vessel must retain integrity in addition to having significance under one or more National Register criteria. NPS recognizes seven aspects of integrity: location,

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design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. An historic vessel should retain several, if not most, of the seven aspects of integrity. As described below, *Zumbrota* retains sufficient integrity to convey her historic significance as an early-twentieth-century pleasure yacht.

Location: *Zumbrota* retains integrity of location, as she continues to be moored in a marine environment. *Zumbrota* was constructed in Morris Heights, New York, but was moored in Tampa, FL between 1919 and 1922, and then in Miami, FL until 1924. She moved to the West Coast in 1924, where she has since been moored in various locations. Her permanent home is now in Marina del Rey, California. Though located thousands of miles from her construction in New York City and original moorage in Florida, *Zumbrota* has remained in a marine environment for her entire existence and along the West Coast for over 90 years.

Design: *Zumbrota* retains some integrity of design as a twentieth century, shallow draft pleasure yacht. She retains her overall form, which includes her original hull and, more specifically, her plumb bow, fantail stern, raised deck and shallow draft – all features that were common of shallow draft luxury yachts in the early twentieth century and which convey her historic use. Her original deckhouse also remains along with finishes on her lower deck of butternut trim, mahogany and white enamel. The layout of circulation corridors and stairs between decks remain, as does the original engine room. *Zumbrota* also retains her pilothouse in its original form, with intact console, wheel and binnacle, and mahogany finishes.

Renovations occurring outside *Zumbrota's* period of significance circa 1975 and 1982 enclosed her aft deck, which accommodated a sundeck aft of the bridge. As a result, a plank was added around the perimeter of the foredeck bulwarks, which modified the hull's upper sheer line but retained the vessel's overall form. Though modified in this way, the now enclosed deck continues to be used recreationally, much as it was in the 1920s. More recent alterations occurred circa 2004 and included the addition of a full-service galley in *Zumbrota's* original deckhouse and the remodeling of her lower deck, which effectively removed most of the lower deck staterooms, the original galley and the crew's quarters. In spite of these interior alterations, *Zumbrota's* exterior design is reminiscent of her historical appearance and continues to convey her historical associations with pleasure yachting during the early twentieth century.

Setting: *Zumbrota* retains integrity of setting because she is currently maintained in the water. Her original construction was specifically intended for cruising the shallow waters of inland waterways along the East Coast. She currently resides in the coastal waters of the Marina del Rey marina.

Materials: *Zumbrota* retains integrity of materials, most of which reflect her status as a luxury yacht. She retains her oak hull, which maintains wooden rubrails on either side, and her various decks retain teak and mahogany finishes, fittings and construction throughout. On the main

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deck, this includes teak foredecks, the original mahogany deckhouse with mahogany encased windows, and original teak cleats, which can be found along the perimeter of the non-original wood parquet floor on the aft deck. She retains butternut trim, mahogany paneling and white enamel finishes on her lower deck, found in the forward and aft seating areas. The louvered mahogany doors to the aft heads on the lower deck also remain. *Zumbrota* still has the original double steel watertight bulkheads that grant access to the engine room on her lower deck as well. On the bridge deck is an original mahogany pilothouse, outfitted with a built-in mahogany console.

Most of the recent modifications to *Zumbrota's* design have been completed with compatible materials. For example, new features in *Zumbrota* have been constructed of mahogany, including the new aft deck enclosure, built-in settees on the aft and lower decks, and mahogany paneling on the main deck bar and in the lower deck heads. The vessel has also been outfitted with brass features, which are compatible with original brass elements such as the portholes and pilothouse wheel.

Workmanship: *Zumbrota* retains integrity of workmanship, as seen in the construction of her original deckhouse and detailing of her lower deck. The paneling of the original mahogany deckhouse and interior mahogany bulkheads on the main, lower and bridge decks are examples of *Zumbrota's* fine workmanship, worthy of her wealthy owners. Similarly, this can be seen in the construction of the built-in mahogany console in the pilothouse, which retains a carved wooden binnacle and original paneling. This quality can also be seen in the wood beamed overheads on the main and bridge decks. On her lower decks, *Zumbrota* retains finely carved diamond-shaped inlays, some of which are outfitted as vents, within the butternut trim located along the overhead of the large forward seating area. She also retains louvered or latticed mahogany doors on her lower deck.

Feeling: *Zumbrota's* integrity of feeling has also been retained, as her overall aesthetic and physical characteristics evoke the sense of her historic use as an early-twentieth century pleasure yacht suitable for cruising shallow waters. *Zumbrota's* grand stature is conveyed through her overall form, stately size, and fine detailing and construction. Her elliptical fantail, plumb bow and enclosed bridge are all recognizable qualities found in classic luxury yacht design during the first decades of the twentieth century that were also appropriate for shallow draft boats navigating Florida's popular cruising waters. Furthermore, the extensive mahogany construction and detailing are features that would have been likely found on a luxury yacht of its era, rather than the modestly designed motor house boats that were becoming common in the inland waterways.

Association: Because *Zumbrota* is currently used as a pleasure craft, she retains her integrity of association. Though her use is no longer limited to those of great wealth, she remains a high-end, luxury vessel, available only for chartered cruises. While she can no longer house visitors for days or months at a time, due to the disassembly of her interior staterooms, she is available

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for recreational activities, including dinners, parties and relaxation, much as she was during her cruising years prior to 1942. The fact that she still retains the characteristic features of a twentieth century, shallow draft luxury yacht also conveys her original association to an era of great wealth and prosperity.

In summary, *Zumbrota* retains integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. While her integrity of design has been somewhat compromised, it is not lost altogether.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Engineering

Maritime History

Period of Significance

1918

(date of construction)

Significant Dates

1918

(date of construction)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Charles L. Seabury Co. and Gas Engine & Power Co., Consolidated

(name changed to Consolidated Shipbuilding Corp. in 1919)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Zumbrota embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period as a gas-powered, shallow-draft, pleasure yacht from the early twentieth century. Such yachts were a reflection of the marked popularity at the time of exploring the inland waterway, which linked much of the east coast from New York to Florida and required especially shallow draft vessels at its southern end. *Zumbrota* was built in 1918 by Charles L. Seabury Co. and Gas Engine & Power Co., Consolidated (later Consolidated Shipbuilding Corp.), one of the country's largest and most prominent yacht builders in the years immediately following World War I. With her enclosed bridge, extensive mahogany finishes, grand staterooms and dramatic fantail stern, *Zumbrota* is a particularly luxurious rendition of the shallow-draft yacht style, befitting the sizable wealth of her original owner, Charles Ringling of Ringling Bros. circus fame. As an intact and representative example of a twentieth century, luxury motor yacht, *Zumbrota* is eligible under National Register Criterion C.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Zumbrota as a Twentieth Century Shallow Draft, Pleasure Yacht

Constructed in 1918, *Zumbrota* is representative of an early twentieth century pleasure yacht, as evidenced by her overall form and construction, as well as the history of her use.¹ She was commissioned by Charles Ringling of the Ringling Brothers fame, and as such, her finishes and detailing also recall the opulence of classic luxury yacht design, which experienced a decline as motor yachts and houseboats became more accessible to those of moderate wealth. Designed for use in the shallow waters of Florida, *Zumbrota* also typifies the characteristics of the shallow draft motor vessel, a distinctly regional typology that was most suitable for navigating Florida's popular inland waterways.

Designed for shallow waters, *Zumbrota* exhibits many features common to contemporary Florida houseboats, which became the equivalent of a winter home for some northeasterners during the first quarter of the twentieth century, when cruising Florida's inland waterways increased in popularity. Whereas grand luxury yachts featured heavier drafts that prohibited them from exploring certain waters, *Zumbrota's* shallow draft of three feet, ten inches (reduced from a more traditional five or six feet) allowed her to enter the plethora of inland canals, lagoons, and bays that Florida had to offer.² In describing the *Samuri*, a yacht similar in overall

¹ See Table.1 Ownership History for *Zumbrota/Vellron/YP595* (Vessel #217044) for a summary of the known ownership history of *Zumbrota* from 1918 to present day.

² "Zumbrota, a 95-Foot Cruiser," *The Rudder*, March 1919, 123.

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specifications to *Zumbrota*, *The Spur* asserted that, "one hundred feet overall, twenty feet beam and three feet six inch draft, will take her over all the inside passage waters of the South without difficulty."³ *Zumbrota's* leisurely cruising speed of 12 to 14 ½ miles per hour was also typical of the Florida motor yacht. Her narrow beam of 18 feet, as well as her dramatic fantail stern, were appropriate features for a boat navigating Florida's calm, temperate waters as well.

Though *Zumbrota* shared engineering features with the more modestly designed houseboats making the trip south to Florida, she also boasted the opulent finishes enjoyed by the wealthiest yacht owners, as evidenced by her mahogany deckhouses and joinery, and her four grand staterooms, also paneled or finished in mahogany (see Figure 4). Though a more unassuming yacht or houseboat traversing Florida's waters may have an open bridge deck, a popular feature of early twentieth century motor yachts, *Zumbrota* retained an enclosed bridge where "absolute protection is afforded the helmsman and there is sufficient space for guests without their being in the way of the man in charge."⁴ Her elliptical fantail, while providing some sense of stability in Florida's mild waters, also suggested a dramatic image of majestic trans-Atlantic liners navigating the open sea.

Zumbrota's use between her completion in 1918 and her transition to naval service in 1942 also defines her use as an early twentieth century pleasure craft. *Zumbrota* was commissioned by Charles Ringling, who moored her in Tampa near his Sarasota home. Ringling had an extensive history of yacht ownership that included an earlier and smaller motor yacht, also called *Zumbrota* (claimed by the Navy for use in World War I), as well as a grander yacht named *Symphonia*, completed in 1922. Though constructed in New York, *Zumbrota* spent most of her early years in Florida. Ringling and his wife Edith commonly used their yachts for fishing trips to the Florida gulf and rivers, a popular yachting sport of the early twentieth century; a 1916 *New York Times* article proclaimed, "Nearly every one [sic] who goes South [to Florida] plans a fishing trip."⁵ After her ownership by Charles Ringling, *Zumbrota* was acquired by N.J. Smith (also cited as H.J. Smith) of New York, who led her on several cruises along the eastern coast, some of which were months long. She continued in a similar capacity to her use when she was under ownership by Ringling, until embarking on a gallant journey to the West Coast, where she was moored in deeper coastal waters.

³ S.W. Cousans, "Yachts and Yachtsmen," *The Spur* 37.5 (March 1926): 98.

⁴ "Zumbrota, a 95-Foot Cruiser."

⁵ David C. Weeks, *Ringling: The Florida Years, 1911-1936* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1993), 54; "Houseboats in Florida Waters."

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Historic Background

Early Twentieth Century Motor Yachting

The early twentieth century motor yacht was a product of the replacement of steam with diesel as a source of power and propulsion. Steam power was the prevailing trend in yacht design during the last half of the nineteenth century, and steam yachting became commonplace in America and abroad as early as the mid-nineteenth century. The first known motor (steam-powered) yacht was commissioned in 1830 by Englishman Thomas Assheton-Smith. This “new-fangled mode of travel” was widely disdained by British aristocracy due to the resulting pollution, and ownership of steam-powered yachts was strictly regulated by the august Royal Yacht Squadron.⁶ In 1842, however, the Queen herself chartered the steam-powered, paddlewheel yacht *Victoria and Albert* after several steam yachts easily motored past her sailing yacht, the *Royal George*, triggering a wider acceptance of the steam yacht.⁷ The first American steam yacht, the *North Star*, was constructed shortly after, in 1853, by the world’s richest man, Cornelius Vanderbilt, who chartered the yacht on an around-the-world-cruise lasting a record four months; the highly-publicized trip demonstrated the practicality and comfortability afforded by luxury steam yachts. By 1900, 189 steam yachts were registered at the New York Yacht Club.⁸

During this extravagant era of yachting, two primary concerns of wealthy yacht owners were related to a boat’s size and speed. Large luxury yachts could easily range from 200 to 400 feet, and such length, combined with a thirst for speed, required larger spaces for boilers, engines and coal bunkers that contributed to a larger hull and overall boat size. The replacement of steam-powered yachts with those fueled by diesel in the first quarter of the twentieth century enabled changes to a yacht’s size and form. With a reduced need for large spaces housing coal bunkers and boilers, a diesel-powered yacht could be smaller in size and more easily maneuverable, while still providing the same amount of space for accommodations on the interior.⁹ The introduction of the gas motor also offered other advantages over the traditional steam engine, including cost-savings in the installation of engines, easier owner operation of the engine itself, and a cleaner yachting experience overall.¹⁰

⁶ Ross MacTaggart, *The Golden Century, Classic Motor Yachts 1830-1930* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 5; The nineteenth century also experienced a transition from the traditional paddlewheel to the screw propeller, which had been designed as prototype in the motor yacht *Archimedes* in 1838, but was not legitimized until decades later; in the U.S., the screw propeller was not seen until 1864 in the design of the motor yacht *Clarita*.

⁸ MacTaggart, 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰ “Motor Boating: The Marine Motor,” *Forest and Stream: A Journal of Outdoor Life, Travel, Nature Study, Shooting, Fishing, Yachting* LXXIV (February 1910), 304.

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Classic motor yachts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, like *Zumbrota*, featured a wide variety of unique design features, among them narrow beams, stately interiors, and variations on the shape of bows and sterns. A particularly notable characteristic of the era that was both functional and aesthetic was the “fantail” or “counter” type of stern, exhibited where “the shell planking sweeps up to a point to join the deck planking to form an elongated counter and an exaggerated overhang.”¹¹ The counter stern, which is perhaps most recognized by this overhang and an accompanying elliptical-shaped bulwark, understandably offered different advantages to different types of boats. In large merchant ships, the counter stern offered little in the way of decreasing resistance but allowed for the use of flat plates which in turn decreased the “amount of furnacing [sic] which must be done;” in smaller sailing ships, however, a counter stern could provide stronger structure and protection of the rudder.¹² Eventually, the counter stern gained popularity in the design of small yachts and launches, but became so stylized that it was less practical structurally and instead was used aesthetically to evoke images of majestic ocean liners while providing ample outdoor space for socializing.¹³ On pleasure boats, the fantail stern “became vulnerable to excessive pounding in a seaway,” and was most appropriate in the design of cruising boats intended for flat, temperate waters.¹⁴

Zumbrota’s fantail stern would have been suitable for the shallow waterways she initially cruised, while conveying her owners’ status and wealth. Though she too had grand interior staterooms of fine construction and finishes of mahogany, teak and butternut, her fantail stern would have been one of her most noticeable features. Similarly, her enclosed bridge deck would have reflected the stature of larger luxury yachts, contributing to her majestic image. The fantail stern, like other early twentieth century yacht features, largely disappeared from yacht design by the 1930s.

For many years, the traditional sailing craft remained a popular typology, but by the early twentieth century, few sailing yachts were completely free of motor technology. Reported *Forest and Stream* in 1910: “The gasoline [sic] motor is rapidly driving the old-time sailing craft out of trade. There are comparatively few sailing vessels now that are not equipped with an auxiliary motor.”¹⁵ The journal also reported that there were more motor boats being built that winter season “than steamers and sailing craft combined,” an observation substantiated just three years later when the *New York Times* reported that there were approximately 400,000

¹¹ Tom Lenfestey and Captain Thompson Lenfestey, Jr., *The Sailor’s Illustrated Dictionary* (New York: The Lyons Press, 1994), 160; Jehardiman, May 26, 2009 (12:13 AM) comment on Thudpucker, “Fantail Launch, etc. What’s the point in a Fantail?” *Boatdesign.net*, May 25, 2009, <http://www.boatdesign.net/forums/boat-design/fantail-launch-etc-whats-point-fantail-27554.html>; the term “fantail” is more commonly used in American nautical language, but generally equates in definition to a counter stern.

¹² John H. La Dage, *Merchant Ships: A Pictorial Study* (Cambridge, MD: Cornell Maritime Press, 1955), 93.

¹³ Rick Etsell, “Fantail Motoryachts: The Great Fantail Motoryachts of the Pacific Northwest,” *Pacific Motor Boat Design*, accessed June 2015, <http://www.pacificmotorboat.com/fantails>.

¹⁴ Lenfestey and Lenfestey, Jr., *The Sailor’s Illustrated Dictionary*, 160.

¹⁵ “Motor Boating: The Marine Motor.”

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motorboats and yachts in the United States and Canada combined, with demand increasing.¹⁶ Prior to the twentieth century, some motor yachts continued to carry masts, which retained nominal sails used to steady narrow vessels and which paid tribute to the graceful pastime of sail boating; the early twentieth century motor yacht, however, featured stripped-down masts with no sails, which “gave the illusion of speed even while standing still, and, like skyscrapers...pointed to the heavens, their emphatic verticality offering a pleasing contrast to a horizontal hull and horizon.”¹⁷ Early images of *Zumbrota* show that she originally had two large masts free of sails installed on her main deck, suggesting that her designers had also attempted to project a nostalgic image of cruising (Figure 3).

While the gas-powered motor yacht remained a symbol of unattainable status and wealth carried forward from the nineteenth century, the cost-effectiveness and ease offered by the diesel motor also opened a market for the production of smaller, more modest yachts targeted at those of moderate wealth. In the opinion of architectural designer and preservationist Ross MacTaggart, author of *The Golden Century: Classic Motor Yachts*, this occurrence contributed to a diminished attractiveness in both exterior and interior design of motor yachts, where “history was ignored as a new era in design became the rule, one that looked toward the future and disdained the past.”¹⁸ Many of the lavish features and finishes of the grand luxury yacht were largely abandoned by the 1920s; in certain areas on the east coast, the colossal yacht was all but abandoned in favor of small motor yachts and houseboats that provided the ability to cruise shallow waters, as opposed to the open sea, while retaining a level of comfort onboard for long journeys. This development, in conjunction with the advancement of an inland waterway system that ran along the east coast, popularized yachting as a form of leisure, sport and travel that could be enjoyed by more than just the upper class. Constructed during this period of transition, *Zumbrota’s* luxurious, yet practical design would have been all the more important in distinguishing her amongst the small, unassuming motor yachts that could be purchased on a modest salary and were quickly overcoming inland waters.

Cruising Florida’s Inland Waterways

In Europe, “the advent of motor yachts created a heretofore unknown cruising season” that was restricted to immensely wealthy European and American yacht owners and which could last for months or even years.¹⁹ With the onset of World War I, however, American yachtsmen on the east coast found that they could no longer travel to the likes of France or the Riviera during the winter months, and chose instead to make Florida their primary destination.²⁰ In 1916, *Motor Boating* magazine eagerly reported, “Twenty-five years ago the charms of lower

¹⁶ Ibid.; “Motor Boat Owners Ready for Season,” *New York Times*, March 9, 1913, 48.

¹⁷ MacTaggart, *The Golden Century*, 156.

¹⁸ Ibid., 6.

¹⁹ Ibid., 5.

²⁰ “Yachtsmen Turn to Florida Waters: War Causes Change in Plans of Pleasure Craft Owners,” *New York Tribune*, Nov. 29, 1915, 10.

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Florida were practically unknown but now they are discovered annually by hundreds of yachtsmen. The gentle climate of the Peninsular State and its countless waterways exert an appeal which is hard indeed to resist."²¹

The inland waterway that paralleled Florida's eastern seaboard was largely characterized by a continuous chain of islands that separated the mainland from the sea and which formed a series of bays, lagoons and inlets where small vessels could cruise without danger of encountering rough oceanic waters.²² Florida's waterways eventually connected to a greater network of rivers, bays, harbors and sounds that formed an inland passage extending along the coast north from Florida to Maine (see Figure 5); in a 1912 article describing the passage, the *Boston Daily Globe* reported:

"It is now possible for a man, in pursuit of either health, pleasure or business, to board a motor yacht drawing four feet of water in New York, and, leaving the ice and snow of Northern latitudes, to travel through inland waters all the way, with the exception of the nautical miles, to the orange groves and flower-clad lands of the far south."²³

The newspaper went on to describe the construction of privately and publicly funded canals that were to extend passages inland, and by 1928, construction of such canals allowed small boats to cruise from Jacksonville to Miami without ever entering the ocean.²⁴ The east coast passage became popular for boat travel during the winter months, and by 1913, the *New York Times* reported that never before had there been a larger fleet of vessels in southern waters, a trend that proved to increase during each winter season.²⁵

This era of leisurely boat travel, described by *The Spur* as one in which the "'inside route' has entered," also contributed to a marked transition in the type of boats popular, if not appropriate, for cruising southern waters. The advent of the motor yacht had made accessible both the sport and activity of yachting to a broader socio-economic class, as boats became smaller and the cost of operations and maintenance cheaper. However, the portion of the inland passage through Florida contained the shallowest waters of the entire waterway, restricting the type of boat that could make the full trip south. As a result, a type of boat emerged that was distinctly regional in design, and while boats could represent the individual

²¹ "Motor Yachts for Florida," *Motor Boating* 17 (March 1916), 13-14.

²² O.M. Wells, "Climate Adds to the Many Charms of East Coast of Florida," *New York Herald Tribune*, January 1, 1928, A8.

²³ "Inland Route to Florida: Motor Yachts May Go From New York to Southern Florida with Only 160 Miles of Ocean Sailing," *Boston Daily Globe*, January 21, 1912, 39.

²⁴ Wells, "Climate Adds to the Many Charms."

²⁵ "Motor Boat Owners Ready for Season," *New York Times*, March 9, 1913, 48; "Power Boats Go South," *The Sun*, December 19, 1915, FEAT14.

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tastes and interests of the owners they served, they ultimately shared specific qualities required to navigate the shallow waters of sunny Florida.

Pleasure Crafts for Southern Waters

The design of *Zumbrota* exhibits qualities of both a shallow draft houseboat and a luxury yacht, while reflecting the personal taste of its wealthy owners. As a result of technical advancements made in boat design and land use during the early twentieth century, a varied range of leisurely “cruising crafts” emerged that could still satisfy the wealthy yachtsman, while targeting a wider socio-economic class.²⁶ One particular typology that became popular with travelers was the houseboat, which offered a level of comfort needed for long trips, and like the yacht, could be designed as a “floating palace” for the rich or a “less pretentious shelter” for the modest consumer; in the mid-1910s, the larger houseboat “passed from the craft of mere comfort to the boat of luxury,” associated more with yachts in overall design, while maintaining an ability to travel outside the inland route to the ocean, as large yachts might.²⁷ Most houseboats would be a suitable form of travel throughout the majority of the inland waterway along the east coast.

However, the inland passage south of Jacksonville, Florida was the most shallow, requiring a maximum draft of four feet, down from the seven feet acceptable from New York to Jacksonville. The journal for *International Marine Engineering* warned, “for a [houseboat] to be serviceable in the inlet and bays of the New England coast and down to the sunny lagoons, shallow streams and inland bays of Florida, a craft is required which combines the seagoing qualities of a good motor yacht with the more material comforts of a roomy houseboat.”²⁸ The “seagoing qualities” of boats navigating Florida’s inland waterways largely equated to an ultra-light draft appropriate for such shallow waters.²⁹ The combination of shallow draft with seaworthiness, a quality referring to proper construction, maintenance and gear of a boat, was considered perhaps the most important aspect of Florida motor yacht and houseboat design.³⁰ The *New York Times* also advertised the advantage of such a quality in a shallow-draft houseboat, as opposed to bulkier, sea-navigating yachts, stating: “With its light draft, waters are accessible to the houseboat which would be prohibitory to the yacht. The owners can ascent the rivers, moor where they please, and when all locality has been thoroughly explored, go to another.”³¹ Drawing only three feet, ten inches, *Zumbrota* was highly equipped to embark on such journeys.

²⁶ “Power Boat Cruises in the Sunny South Becoming Popular,” *The Sun*, January 19, 1913, S3.

²⁷ “Houseboats in Florida Waters,” *New York Times*, February 20, 1916, S1.

²⁸ “Shallow-Draft Houseboats for Yachtsmen,” *International Marine Engineering*, Dec. 1, 1915 (Vol. XX, No. 12), 536.

²⁹ Owen Buttolph, “The Inland Waterway,” *The Spur* (December 1927), 156.

³⁰ “Motor Yachts for Florida.”

³¹ “Houseboats in Florida Waters.”

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In 1916, *Motor Boating* magazine offered a pictorial study of the types of motor yachts or houseboats that, like *Zumbrota*, had recently been created for use in Florida. These boats exhibited a diversity in design, proving in part that yacht design could be individually distinct while accommodating the “sea-going qualities” appropriate for cruising in Florida’s inland waterways. The spread noted that a shallow draft was “perhaps the most important” seaworthy quality for a Florida motor yacht.³² The boats presented in the article ranged from as little as 40 feet in length to over 100 feet, and were equipped with large decks to take advantage of Florida’s hospitable climate. Generally located abaft of the deckhouses, these ample decks were shaded by open-air canopies that provided ventilation. Quarters were located below deck; these spacious rooms were equipped with abundant windows that made passengers comfortable during the months-long voyages from the northeast. While *Zumbrota* was a luxury example of a shallow draft houseboat, she shared many of these important qualities with the boats featured in this article.

Construction, Ownership and Use³³

Consolidated Shipbuilding Corporation

Zumbrota was constructed for Charles Ringling in 1918 by Charles L. Seabury Co. and Gas Engine & Power Co., Consolidated of Morris Heights, New York. The Charles L. Seabury Co. was established in 1885 in Nyack, New York and specialized in building steam-powered yachts. In 1896, Seabury merged with the Morris Heights-based Gas Engine & Power Co., which had been established about the same time and was known for its naphtha-powered launches.³⁴ Initially, the merged company operated under the name “Charles L. Seabury Co. and Gas Engine & Power Co., Consolidated.” The company’s Morris Heights yard was located in the Bronx along the Harlem River, at the southern end of what is now Roberto Clemente State Park (see Figures 1 and 2). The yard was frequently referred to as Speedway Shipyard, in reference to the company’s introduction of the Speedway line of gasoline engines in 1893.³⁵ Before World War I, production at the Morris Heights plant consisted mainly of small craft and medium-sized yachts.³⁶ During the war, the plant was significantly expanded, in order to take on the production of larger steam and power-driven craft, including trading ships and towboats.³⁷ By 1919, the Morris Heights yard was “one of the few plants in which high-class yacht work can be done.”³⁸

³² “Motor Yachts for Florida.”

³³ See Table 1. “Ownership History” for a fully chronology of *Zumbrota*’s owners.

³⁴ “Consolidated Shipbuilding, Morris Heights NY,” Shipbuilding History, <http://www.shipbuildinghistory.com/history/shipyards/6yachtsmall/consolidated.htm>.

³⁵ “Curtis Yacht at Morris Heights,” *The Rudder*, June 1919 (Vol XXXV, No. 6), 264; Ross MacTaggart, *The Golden Century: Classic Motor Yachts, 1830-1930*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, 88.

³⁶ “Tugs Building at Morris Heights,” *The Rudder*, July 1919 (Vol. XXXV, No. 7), 330.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ “Curtis Yacht at Morris Heights,” *The Rudder*, June 1919 (Vol XXXV, No. 6), 264.

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In 1919, soon after construction of *Zumbrota*, the company was renamed Consolidated Shipbuilding Corp.³⁹ According to a 1919 account, Consolidated “turned out many very fine steam yachts as well as many cruising power boats and small craft.”⁴⁰ The same account identifies nine steam yachts, six power boats, as well as some war boats constructed by Consolidated.

Given the wartime conversion to larger-scale shipbuilding, yacht building operations were rare in the years immediately following World War I. According to a 1919 account, Consolidated was one of a very few large-scale facilities the retained the requisite craftsmanship necessary for yacht construction:

One trouble naval architects are likely to experience is to find yards where large yachts can be built. Before the war there were several shipbuilding plants, notably Pusey & Jones, New York Shipbuilding Company, Harlan & Hollingsworth, Chester Shipbuilding Company, and others that were able to turn out fine yachts. Yacht building is different from shipbuilding. Fine workman ship inside and outside is required on a yacht and special classes of workmen are necessary to do this work. The joiner work of a yacht must be as fine as the best furniture. Fine joiner work is particularly hard to do and the men who specialize on that work are few. When the big shipbuilding plants undertook the work for the Shipping Board all the polished finished work disappeared, and it will be some time before any of the big yards have an organization capable of turning out handsome, well-finished yachts.

The plants that can do good yacht work can easily be counted. These are the Lawleys at Neponset, the Consolidated Shipbuilding Company at Morris Heights, the Robins yard in the Erie Basin, the Bath Iron Works at Bath, Me., Herreshoffs at Bristol, Jacob at City Island, and a few smaller plants. It would be well for some of the larger shipbuilding plants to pay some attention to yacht building and prepare for the trade that is coming. There will be lots of work for all.⁴¹

According to a recent book-length overview of motor yachts, in the early twentieth century, Consolidated “became possibly the largest manufacturer of custom yachts in existence, having no fewer than thirteen launching ways and...the ability to produce virtually everything that went aboard a Consolidated vessel.”⁴² Following World War II, Consolidated purchased the

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “Twenty-One New Yachts,” *The Rudder*, June 1919 (Vol XXXV, No. 6), 260.

⁴² Ross MacTaggart, *The Golden Century: Classic Motor Yachts, 1830-1930*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, 88.

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Robert Jacob shipyard on nearby City Island and closed the Morris Heights facility. Consolidated ceased boatbuilding operations in 1958.⁴³

Charles Edward Ringling (1864-1926)

Zumbrota was built for Charles Ringling of Sarasota, Florida as his second *Zumbrota*, the first being a 70-foot motor boat constructed in 1914 by the Matthews Boat Company of Port Clinton, Ohio. Ringling's first *Zumbrota*, later redesignated SP-93 and YP-93, was acquired by the Navy and placed into service in August 1917.⁴⁴ The first *Zumbrota's* acquisition by the Navy may have prompted Ringling to commission the larger 1918 yacht that would share its name.

Charles Edward Ringling (1864-1926) was born in McGregor, Iowa. He grew up in Baraboo, Wisconsin, where he and his six brothers developed the Ringling Bros. circus, along with other successful business ventures. Charles Ringling was in charge of production for the Ringling Bros. circus, which was one of the largest circuses in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ringling married Edith Conway in Baraboo, Wisconsin in 1889. In 1912, they established a residence in Sarasota, Florida, the wintertime base of the Ringling Bros. circus. Ringling invested heavily in local real estate and established the Ringling Trust and Savings Bank in downtown Sarasota.⁴⁵

Charles Ringling owned the *Zumbrota* from 1919 to 1922, during which time he moored the boat nearby in Tampa, Florida and used it for fishing trips in Florida's gulf and rivers. In 1922, Charles sold the boat to N.J. Smith, who moved the boat to Miami. That same year, Ringling took possession of *Symphonia*, a 120-foot steel yacht built for him by Consolidated Shipbuilding Corp.⁴⁶

⁴³ "Consolidated Shipbuilding, Morris Heights NY," Shipbuilding History, <http://www.shipbuildinghistory.com/history/shipyards/6yachtsmall/consolidated.htm>.

⁴⁴ Naval Historical Center, "Zumbrota," <http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/OnlineLibrary/photos/sh-civil/civsh-xz/zumbrota.htm>; NavSource Online: Section Patrol Craft Photo Archive, "YP-93, ex-Zumbrota (SP 93)," <http://www.navsource.org/archives/12/170093.htm>. This earlier *Zumbrota* remained in Navy service until 1926, after which it was sold to the Thompson Fish Co. of Key West.

⁴⁵ "Charles Ringling," Sarasota County website, <https://www.scgov.net/History/Pages/CharlesRingling.aspx>.

⁴⁶ "The New Steel Motor Yacht 'Symphonia'," *Motor Boat*, December 1922 (Vol. XIX, No. 2), 21; "Ringling Here on Fine Yacht," *The Evening Independent* (St. Petersburg, Florida), January 19, 1923, 1. The *Symphonia's* rusted hull was located in the Santa Rosa Sound at Navarre Beach, Florida in the early 2000s.

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Early 1920s

In 1922, *Zumbrota* passed into the hands of N.J. Smith of New York who moved the boat to Miami and, like many yacht owners of the era, cruised the boat along the eastern coast. A December issue of *Motor Boat* magazine chronicled one of *Zumbrota's* early journeys with the Smith family, who had renamed the boat *Vellron*:

The *Vellron*...left Miami last March with the family on board and has cruised as far north as Bar Harbor [Maine] touching all points of interest between, and attending the Yale-Harvard races. She returned to the Biscayne Bay [Yacht Club in Miami] Nov. 11, Mr. and Mrs. Smith and their two sons having made the entire trip on board.⁴⁷

Though intended for cruising in Florida's shallow waters, *Zumbrota* was also capable of more challenging voyages. In 1924, she completed a 6,000-mile cruise from Miami to the West Coast, where N.J. Smith sold the yacht to lumberman E.C. Finkbine. Finkbine and his son owned *Zumbrota* for approximately twelve years and moored her in Los Angeles.⁴⁸ In 1937, C.S. Smith, the former mayor of Compton, took ownership of *Zumbrota*. Smith was an avid yachtsman who, that same year, was appointed rear-commodore of the Long Beach Yacht Club; it is unclear in exactly what capacity *Zumbrota* was used during Smith's ownership.⁴⁹

World War II Use

With the United States' entry into World War II, auxiliary and civilian vessels were called to enroll in the U.S. Coast Guard and Navy, much like they were during World War I under the 1916 Naval Reserve Act, which allowed for enrollment of civilian boats "suitable for naval purposes..."⁵⁰ With the mass production of the family cruiser, which "had become the backbone of the U.S. motorboat industry" by 1936, nearly 300,000 pleasure boats were cruising federal waters in 1939; as such, pleasure crafts were readily available for use by the United States for the protection of its coasts during World War II.⁵¹ Like many private yachts during World War II, the *Zumbrota* (under the name *Vellron*) was acquired by the U.S. Navy for use as a yard patrol (YP) craft. By 1942, she was named by the *Los Angeles Times* a "State Naval Guard vessel" in an article which described a Memorial Day ceremony conducted in Los Angeles Harbor on May 30, 1942 and which featured Lieutenant Commander Leslie H. Baier,

⁴⁷ J. Roy Tracy, "Miami Notes," *Motor Boat* 19 (December 1922), 36. The boat was not renamed *Zumbrota* until the mid-1970s; for simplicity, *Zumbrota* is the name used in this nomination wherever possible.

⁴⁸ "Sea Beasts are Caught By Camera," *Los Angeles Times*, May 31, 1924, A2.

⁴⁹ Bob Ruskauff, "Yacht Chiefs Assume Posts," *Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1937, A11.

⁵⁰ C. Kay Larson, "Bravo Zero: The Coast Guard Auxiliary in World War II," United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, accessed June 2016, http://wow.uscgaux.info/Uploads_wowII/I-DEPT/pdf_files/AuxHx.pdf.

⁵¹ Ibid.

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commanding officer of California's naval forces, casting a red, white and blue flowered wreath into the waters of the port's main channel (see Figure 7).⁵²

A year later, in 1943, *Zumbrota* had been assigned to the West Coast Sound Training Squadron, Task Force 14.3 (Fleet Operational Training Command, Pacific) of the West Coast Sound School in San Diego, under the name YP-595.⁵³ A 1944 log listed the mission of the Squadron, which by that point had been reclassified as Task Force 14.2, as:

...the accomplishment of the most effective sonar training of the officers and men ordered to report for instruction and to provide sonar exercises for vessels undergoing shakedown or refresher training in the San Diego area in order that they should be ready for active operations...⁵⁴

During this naval period, which lasted until approximately 1946, *Zumbrota* was painted gray, and her original twin, 150-horsepower engines were replaced with 195-horsepower diesel engines.⁵⁵ *Merchant Vessel* records show that, though acquired by the Navy, she remained under ownership of C.S. Smith between 1942 and 1944, before being removed from the logs altogether in 1945 and 1946 because of her designation "to United States;" she was eventually relisted in 1947.⁵⁶

Years as a Fishing Charter Vessel

Following the war, C.S. Smith resumed ownership of *Zumbrota*, though it is unclear in what capacity she was used immediately following her wartime service. As early as 1953, it appears she was used as a charter vessel to Catalina Island, operated by the Island Transportation Company.⁵⁷ In 1954, she was chartered by 30 members of the Long Beach Spin Fishing Club on a trip from Newport to either Catalina or the San Clemente Islands.⁵⁸ *Merchant Vessel* records confirm that C.S. Smith continued to own *Zumbrota* until 1955, though he continued to appear as a managing owner until 1957. Between 1955 and 1957, the boat was also owned by an E.J. Jacklin.

⁵² "Wreath Cast on Waters in Day's Observance at Port," *Los Angeles Times*, May 31, 1942, A2.

⁵³ United States Fleet: Headquarters of the Commander in Chief, Navy Department, Washington D.C., "MR 404 – Composition of Task Forces," November 4, 1943, 11,

<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/resources/images/mr/mr0667.pdf>

⁵⁴ "War Diary, 10/1-31/44," West Coast Sound Training Squadron, West Coast Sound School, The National Archives, (Catalog ID 4697018), October 31, 1944, 1.

⁵⁵ "High Hopes for Lady of High Seas," *Long Beach Independent*, March 5, 1975, 33.

⁵⁶ *Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States* (Washington: United States Treasury Department, Bureau of Customs, 1945), 786.

⁵⁷ "Catalina Ship Service Franchise Sought," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, April 24, 1953, 2.

⁵⁸ Donnell Culpepper, "Fishin' Around," *Long Beach Independent Press-Telegram*, April 4, 1954, 59.

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Zumbrota remained a fishing charter vessel into the following decade. In 1958, she was acquired by Captain Jack Kirk, who chartered her on albacore fishing excursions.⁵⁹ In several ads he posted in the *Los Angeles Times*, Kirk advertised 32 bunks that could sleep a total of 40 people. A 1972 announcement from the *Long Beach Independent* also advertised “a full day of fishing fun” on the *Vellron (Zumbrota)* on a chartered course from the Belmont Pier in Long Beach to San Clemente. It is unclear who owned *Zumbrota* at this time, as digitized *Merchant Vessel* records conclude at 1965.⁶⁰ During the period between 1965 and 1975, Dwight Ivy retained ownership of the *Zumbrota* for a time and also used her as a fishing boat.⁶¹

Return to a Pleasure Craft

In 1974, *Zumbrota* was purchased by Sally Reichenbach, a businesswoman from Burbank who embarked on a laborious overhaul to return the boat to its 1920s splendor (she also restored the *Zumbrota* name in the process). The project, which cost approximately \$25,000 in materials, was primarily cosmetic in scope, though one notable alteration was the addition of a sundeck aft of the bridge “for dinner cruises,” supported by walls that enclosed the main deck aft; the project also included the addition of a bar, tables and barbecue pits (see Figures 8 and 9).⁶² Immediately following her renovation, *Zumbrota* was used for commercial trips such as whale watching tours. Reichenbach only briefly owned *Zumbrota*, as the boat had been relocated to the Pacific Northwest by the late 1970s. In 1979 she was purchased by Captain Lavina Longstaff from an unnamed couple in Everett, Washington. Longstaff moored *Zumbrota* in Anacortes and Bellingham, Washington.⁶³ A 1982 newspaper article confirmed that the boat’s main deck had been altered by this time, though the lower-deck staterooms remained largely intact, “nearly as they were when the Ringling Brothers took delivery.”⁶⁴ Upon her acquisition, Captain Longstaff began another restoration and recertification of the boat, costing up to \$250,000. *Zumbrota* remained in use as a charter boat during this time.

Hornblower Cruises and Events, a private charter and event company founded in 1980, bought *Zumbrota* in 1985, and following its acquisition, the ship was “rebuilt and refurbished for luxury harbor cruises,” including the addition of teak decks, brass fittings and a full-service galley, with a capacity for 150 passengers or 100 cocktail party guests.⁶⁵ *Zumbrota* joined Hornblower’s Marina del Rey fleet from 1995 to 1997, rejoining it in 2004. The boat continues to be used for luxury cruises and is moored at Fisherman’s Village in Marina del Rey.

⁵⁹ “Display Ad 43,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 14, 1961, C7.

⁶⁰ “A Full Day of Fishing Fun,” *Long Beach Independent*, June 2, 1972, 59.

⁶¹ “High Hopes for Lady of High Seas.”

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ “Yacht of the famous now plies Washington waters,” *The Spokesman-Review* (Spokane, WA), October 13, 1982, 10.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ “Zumbrota rejoins Hornblower’s Marina Fleet,” *The Argonaut*, July 22, 2004.

Zumbrota
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Table 1. Ownership History for Zumbrota/Vellron/YP595 (Vessel #217044)

The following table consolidates known ownership history for *Zumbrota* from her completion in 1918 to the present day, compiled from vessel logs and newspaper articles. Unless otherwise noted, information is drawn from *Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States* (including part VI, *Seagoing Vessels of the United States*), of which digitized copies from 1895 to 1965 are available.⁶⁶

Years	Name	Owner	Home Port	Notes
1919 – 1922	<i>Zumbrota</i>	Charles Ringling	Tampa, FL	
1922 – 1924	<i>Vellron</i>	H.J. Smith	Miami, FL	Records regarding the exact name of the owner are inconsistent, he is referred to as “N.J. Smith” in various articles but “H.J. Smith” in the <i>Annual List of Merchant Vessels</i>
1924 – 1931	<i>Vellron</i>	E.C. Finkbine	Los Angeles, CA	
1931 – 1936	<i>Vellron</i>	Robert Finkbine	Los Angeles, CA	
1936	<i>Vellron</i>	Joseph B. Mayer	Los Angeles, CA	
1936 – 1937	<i>Vellron</i>	L.I. Hill	Los Angeles, CA	While not listed in the <i>Annual List of Merchant Vessels</i> , L.I. Hill of Hollywood is reported to have purchased <i>Zumbrota</i> from E.C. Finkbine in a 1936 <i>Los Angeles Times</i> article ⁶⁷
1937 – 1941	<i>Vellron</i>	C.S. Smith	Los Angeles, CA	
1942 – 1946	YP 595	U.S. Navy	San Diego, CA	During this period <i>Zumbrota</i> belonged to the West Coast Sound Training Squadron, Task 14.2/3 (Fleet Operation Training Command, Pacific) of the West Coast Sound School of San Diego ⁶⁸
1946 – 1955	<i>Vellron</i>	C.S. Smith	Los Angeles, CA	
1955 – 1957	<i>Vellron</i>	E.J. Jacklin	Los Angeles, CA	C.S. Smith remains listed as a managing owner
1958 – 1965	<i>Vellron</i>	Jack Kirk	Los Angeles, CA	Jack Kirk may have owned <i>Zumbrota</i> longer than 1965, which is when the digitized versions of the <i>Annual List of Merchant Vessels</i> concludes
1972	<i>Vellron</i>	Unknown	Long Beach, CA	An advertisement to charter the <i>Vellron</i> is listed in a 1972 <i>Long Beach Independent</i> issue, but does not include information regarding ownership ⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States*, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Navigation, modified September 2, 2011, accessed June 2016, http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/AMH/USMM/Annual_List/.

⁶⁷ Waldo Drake, “Shipping News,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 10, 1936, 22.

⁶⁸ “MR 404 – Composition of Task Forces,” 11.

⁶⁹ “A Full Day of Fishing Fun.”

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Years	Name	Owner	Home Port	Notes
1974 - unknown	<i>Zumbrota</i>	Sally Reichenbach	Wilmington, CA	A 1975 <i>Long Beach Independent</i> article describes Reichenbach's ownership ⁷⁰
c. 1975-1979	<i>Zumbrota</i>	Unknown	Everett, WA	Per a 1982 <i>Spokesman-Review</i> article, <i>Zumbrota</i> is owned by an unknown Everett, WA couple between its ownership by Sally Reichenbach in 1974 and its purchase by Lavina Longstaff in 1979 ⁷¹
1979 – c. 1985	<i>Zumbrota</i>	Lavina Longstaff	Anacortes/Bellingham, WA	
1985 – present	<i>Zumbrota</i>	Hornblower Cruises and Events	Marina del Rey, CA	<i>Zumbrota</i> has been part of the Marina del Rey fleet 1995-1997 and 2004-present ⁷²

⁷⁰ "High Hopes for Lady of High Seas."

⁷¹ "Yacht of the famous now plies Washington waters."

⁷² "Zumbrota rejoins Hornblower's Marina Fleet."

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

See Location Map/Latitude—Longitude Point Map

Latitude: 33.972708 Longitude: -118446639

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 11 Easting: Northing:

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary corresponds to the exterior surfaces of the vessel.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary was selected to encompass the entire vessel, but nothing beyond the vessel.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Matthew M. Davis & Mickie Torres-Gil
organization: Architectural Resources Group
street & number: 720 SW Washington Street, Suite 300
city or town: Portland state: OR zip code: 97205
e-mail m.davis@arg-pnw.com
telephone: 971.256-5320
date: September 2016

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
- **Photographs**
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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**Photo Key corresponding for photographs 3-21, existing conditions photos (ARG, 2016).
(Note that there is no photograph 1 or 2)**

Photo 3. Exterior, port side (ARG, 2016).

Photo 4. Exterior, starboard side (ARG, 2016).

Photo 5. Original deckhouse forewall (ARG, 2016).

Photo 6. Original deckhouse, small salon (ARG, 2016).

Photo 7. Original deckhouse, small salon, forward stairs and non-original bar (ARG, 2016).

Photo 8. New deckhouse galley (ARG, 2016).

Photo 9. Built-in settee in main salon, aft of pilothouse stair (ARG, 2016).

Photo 10. Main salon (ARG, 2016).

Photo 11. Additional dining aft of main salon (ARG, 2016).

Photo 12. Large forward seating area on lower deck, with view aft towards small forward seating area (ARG, 2016).

Photo 13. Large forward seating area on lower deck, with built-in vanity (ARG, 2016).

Photo 14. Lower deck service area (ARG, 2016).

Photo 15. Double steel watertight bulkhead to engine room on lower deck amidships (ARG, 2016).

Photo 16. Built-in corner settee in aft seating area on lower deck (ARG, 2016).

Photo 17. Aft mahogany head doors on lower deck (ARG, 2016).

Photo 18. Circulation corridor to large aft hold on lower deck (ARG, 2016).

Photo 19. Original pilothouse console, wheel and pinnacle on bridge deck (ARG, 2016).

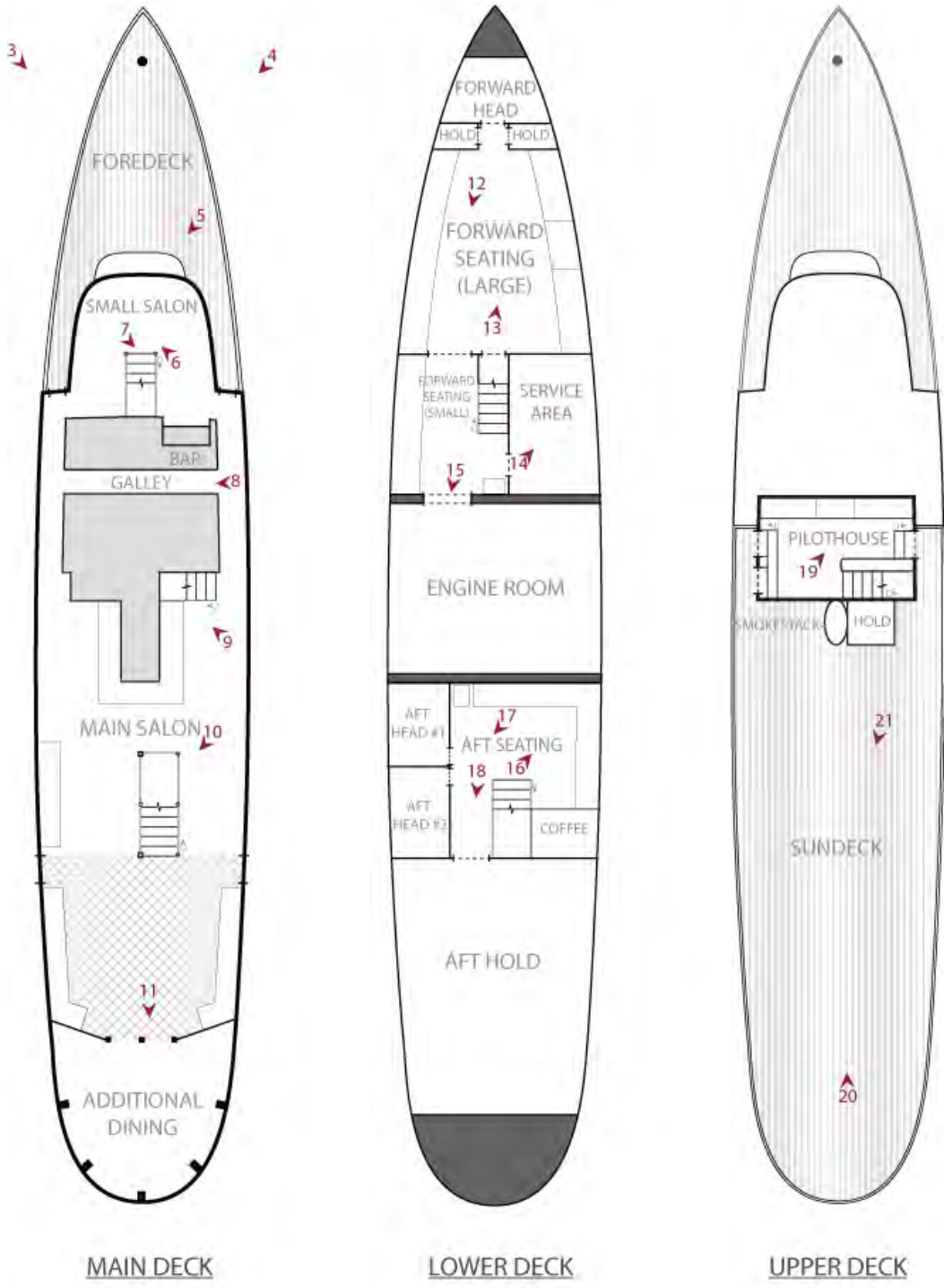
Photo 20. Sun deck, view aft (ARG, 2016).

Photo 21. Sun deck, view forward towards pilothouse, smokestack and small hold (ARG, 2016).

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**Photo Key/Current deck plans of *Zumbrota* (ARG, 2016).
(Note that there is no Photograph 1 or 2)**



Zumbrota
Name of Property

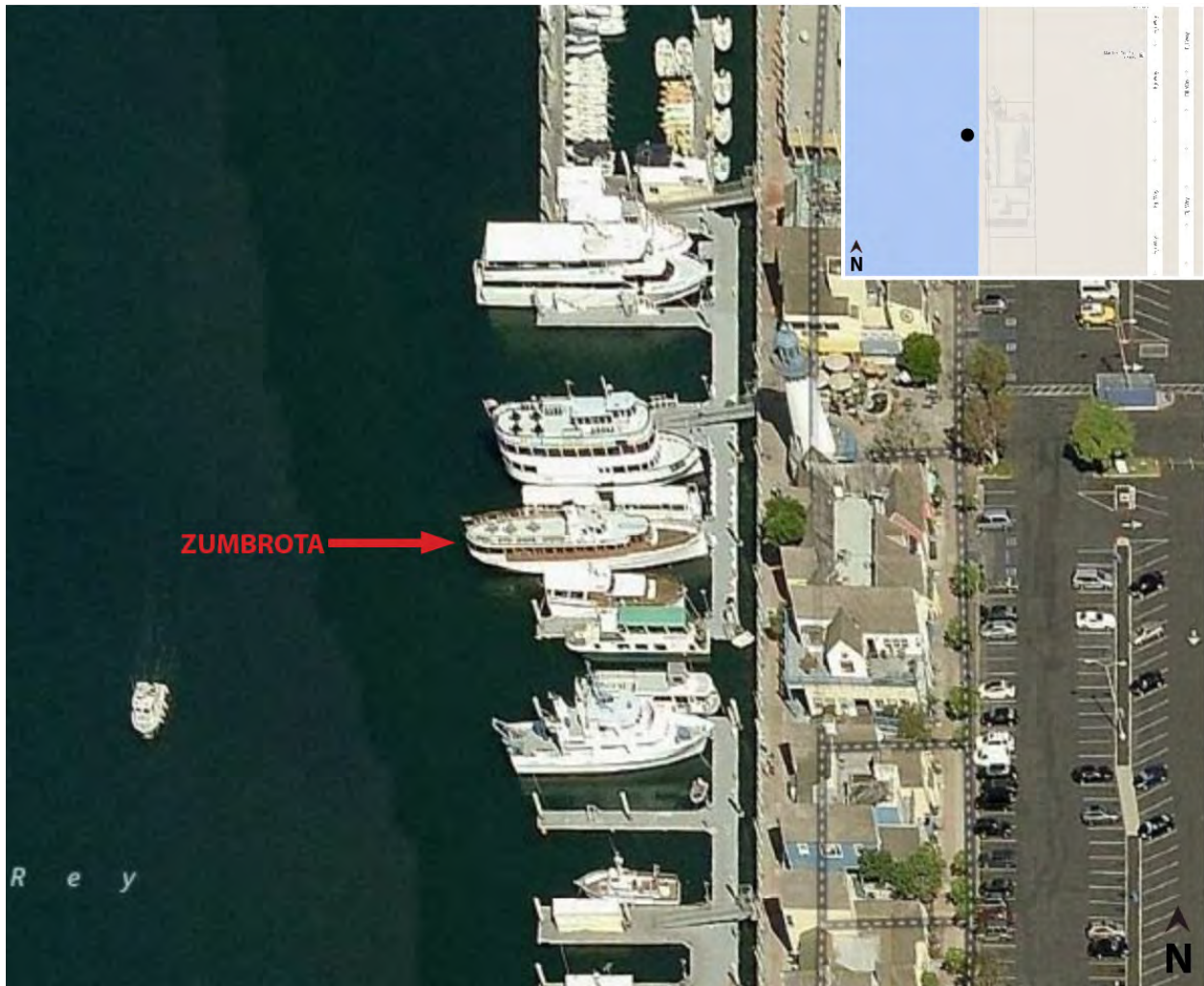
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Location Map and Latitude/Longitude Point Map (Bing Maps with annotations by ARG, 2016).

Center of Yacht:

Latitude: 33.972708

Longitude: -118.446639



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Figure 1. Northward view of Washington Bridge spanning Harlem River, c. 1905. The Morris Heights yard of Charles L. Seabury Co. and Gas Engine & Power Co., Consolidated is visible in the distance on the east side of the river. (Source: Shorpy.com, <http://www.shorpy.com/node/19992>.)



Figure 1a. Close-up of Morris Heights yard in Figure 1.

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Figure 2. 1919 view of yachts being repainted at Consolidated Shipbuilding Corp.'s Morris Heights yard for return to peacetime usage. (Source: *The Rudder*, June 1919 (Vol XXXV, No. 6), front cover.)

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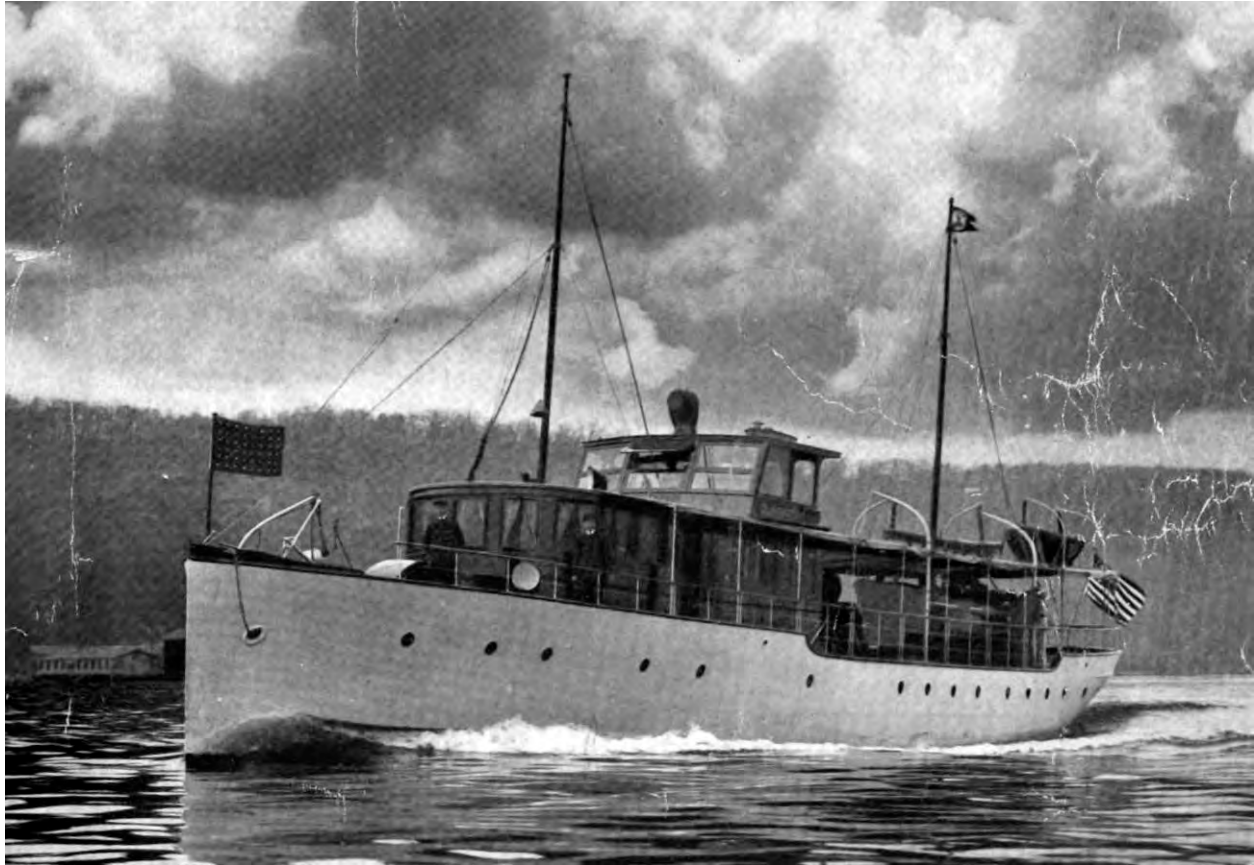
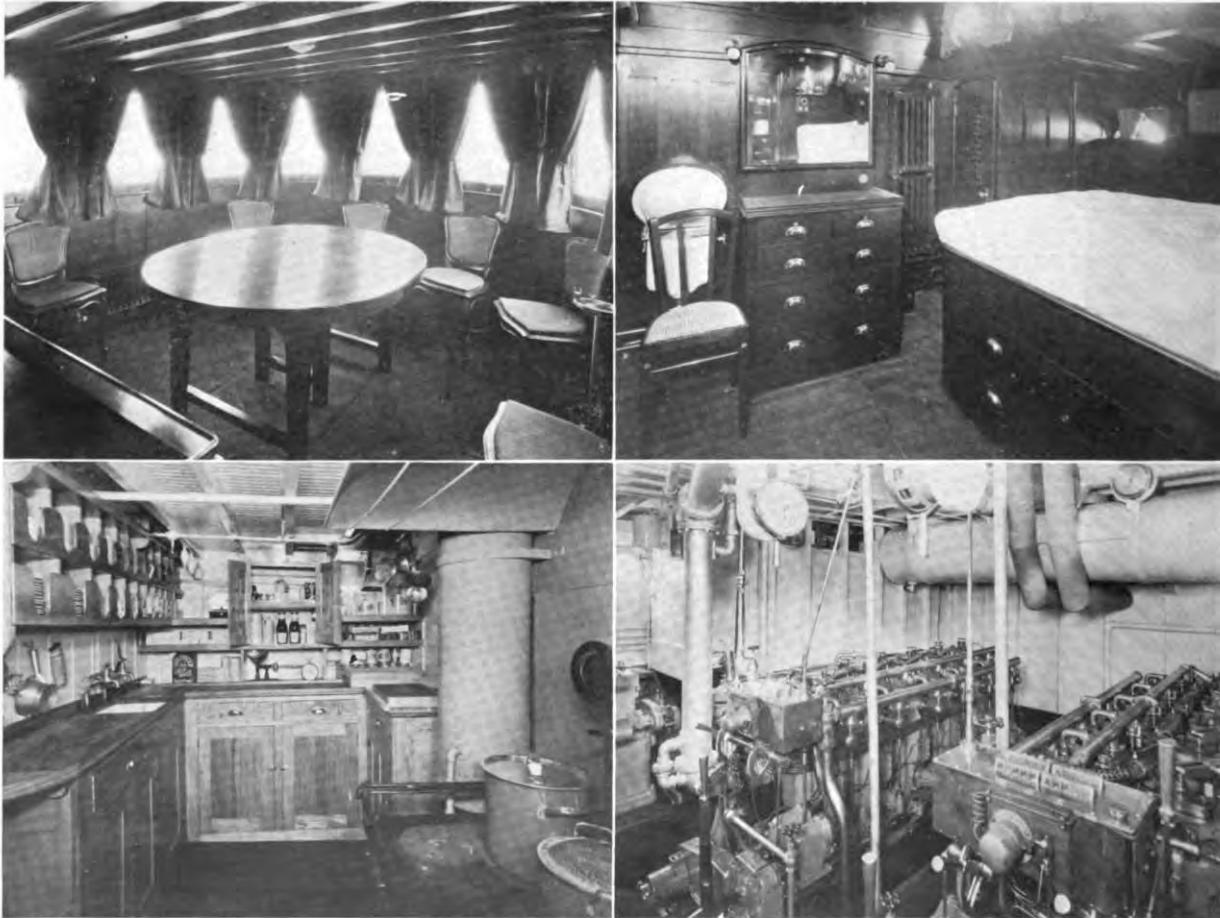


Figure 3. 1919 view of the *Zumbrota*, port side. (Source: *The Rudder*, March 1919 (Vol XXXV, No. 3), front cover.)

Zumbrot
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Interior Views of the Power Yacht Zumbrot. The Dining Saloon and Owner's Stateroom Are Seen in the Upper Pictures, and the Galley and Engine Room With the Speedway Engines Are Below

Figure 4. 1919 interior views of the Zumbrot. (Source: *The Rudder*, March 1919 (Vol XXXV, No. 3), 122.)

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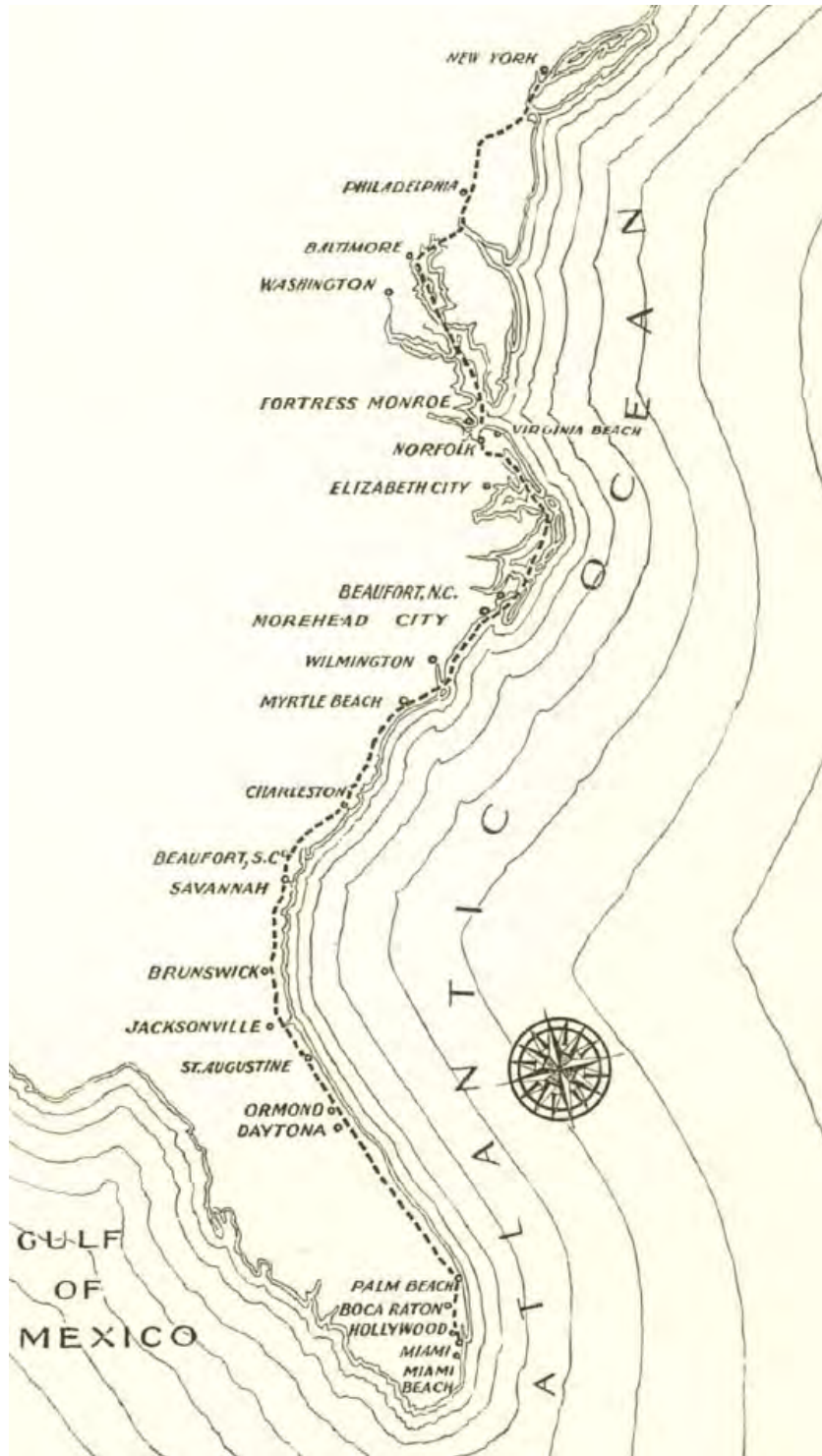


Figure 5. Map of the inland waterway along America's Atlantic Coast. (Source: Owen Buttolph, "The Inland Waterway: I. An ideal route to Florida," *The Spur*, December 1, 1927 (Vol. XL, No. 11), 156.)

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Figure 6. Undated and unsourced photo of *Zumbrota* (displayed onboard the ship). Since this photograph was taken, her foredeck bench has been modified and her hatch and canopy removed.

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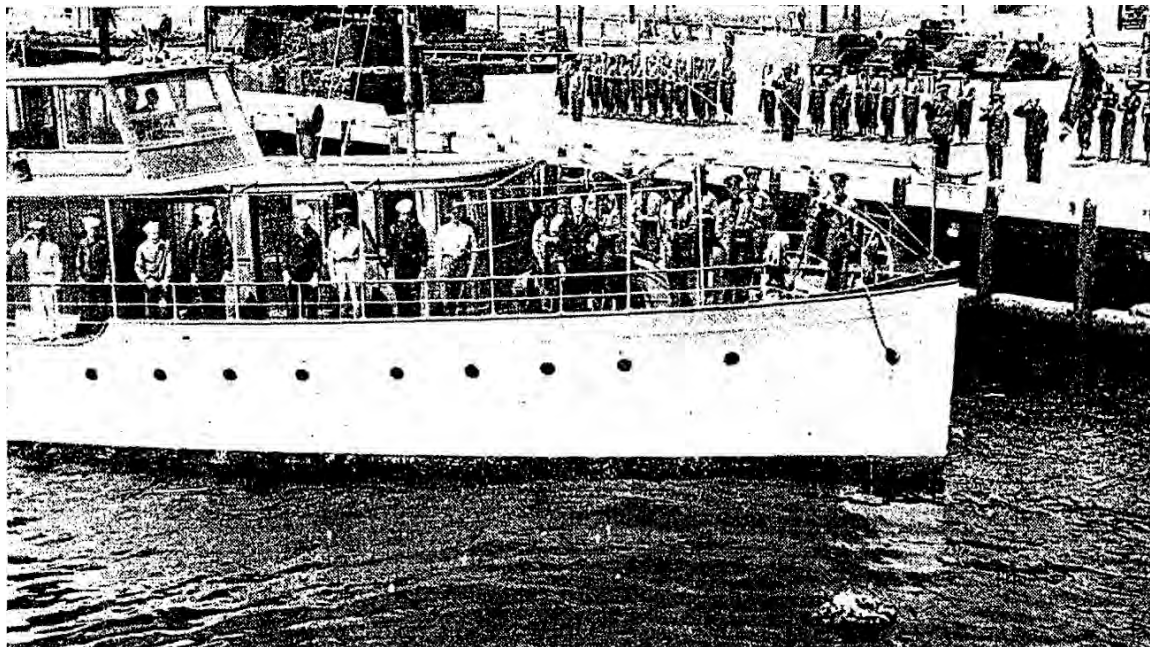


Figure 7. 1942 view of Lieutenant Commander Leslie Baier casting a red, white and blue wreath from the deck of the *Vellron* onto the waters of Los Angeles Harbor in honor of Memorial Day. (Source: "Wreath Cast on Waters in Day's Observance at Port," *Los Angeles Times*, May 31, 1942, A2.)

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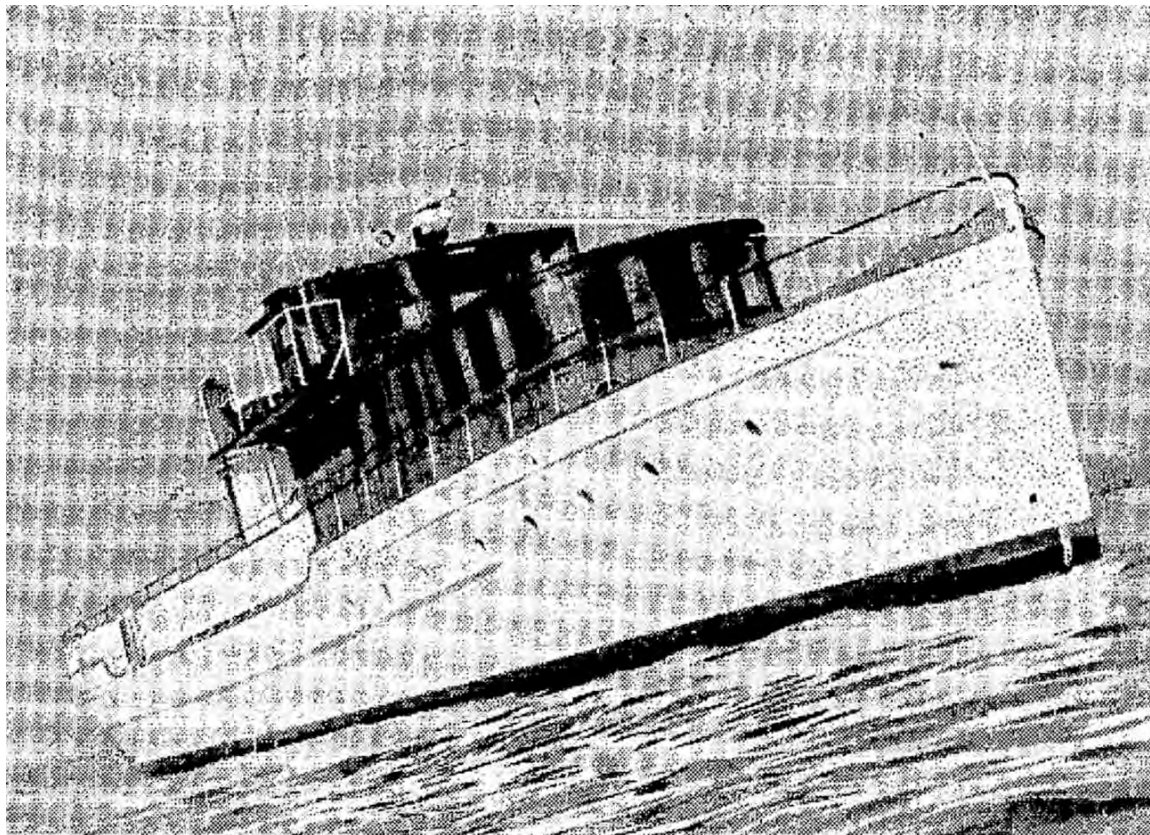


Figure 8. 1975 view of the Zumbrota, starboard side, prior to the addition of new deck walls and sundeck. Her canopies have been removed and her foredeck railing modified. (Source: "High Hopes for Lady of High Seas," *Long Beach Independent*, March 5, 1975, 33.)

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Figure 9. 1982 view of Zumbrota, port side, with the addition of painted deck walls. (Source: "Yacht of the famous now plies Washington waters," *The Spokesman-Review* (Spokane, WA), October 13, 1982, 10.)

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ZUMBROTA





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FIRE STATION #2

















RESTRICTED AREA
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110115







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: ZUMBROTA (yacht)

Multiple Name:

State & County: CALIFORNIA, Los Angeles

Date Received: 2/3/2017 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 3/20/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100000762

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 3/20/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Zumbrota (yacht) is locally significant under National Register Criterion C in the areas of Architecture (Maritime) and Engineering (Maritime). Constructed in 1918, the ship is a fine example of a motorized, shallow-draft, luxury yacht, designed specifically to cruise the relatively calm waters of Florida's coastal waterway. The enclosure of the aft deck and creation of a new sundeck are not original to the ship or its character as a luxury cruising yacht, but the changes are relatively confined to the rear areas and do not impact the ship's character-defining structure and period finishes (fantail stern, oak hull, mahogany and brass details, pilot house/deck house/stateroom configuration).

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept NR Criterion C

Reviewer Paul Lusignan

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229

Date 3/20/2017

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : YES

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

Zumbrota
Marina del Rey, Los Angeles County
Staff Report

Zumbrota is a private charter vessel moored at Fisherman's Village in Marina del Rey, a seaside community with 19 marinas housing approximately 6,500 boats. *Zumbrota* was constructed in 1918 as a wooden-hulled shallow range passenger vessel by Charles L. Seabury Co. and Gas Engine & Power Co., Consolidated, of Morris Heights, NY. Approximately 95 feet in length, she features a fantail stern, three decks, and finishes of teak or mahogany, and is powered by twin 195-horsepower diesel engines. She served as a pleasure yacht under several owners until 1942, when she transitioned briefly to a military vessel and subsequently to a fishing charter vessel. *Zumbrota* was converted back to a pleasure craft in the mid-1970s and renovated in the 1970s and 1980s, including enclosure of the aft deck, addition of a sundeck aft of the bridge, and the addition of a full service galley on the main deck.

Zumbrota is eligible at the local level of significance under Criterion C as an intact and representative example of a gas-powered, shallow-draft, pleasure yacht from the early twentieth century. Such yachts were a reflection of the marked popularity at the time of exploring the inland waterway, which linked much of the east coast from New York to Florida and required especially shallow draft vessels at its southern end. The period of significance is 1918, her year of construction. Builder Charles Seabury was one of the country's largest and most prominent yacht builders in the years immediately following World War I. With her closed bridge, mahogany finishes, grand staterooms and dramatic fantail stern, *Zumbrota* is a particularly luxurious rendition of the shallow-draft yacht, befitting the wealth of her original owner, Charles Ringling of Ringling Bros. circus fame.

Zumbrota has experienced some alteration, the most visible of which was the enclosure of her aft deck. As a result, a plank was added around the perimeter of the foredeck bulwarks, which modified the hull's upper sheer line. In circa 2004 a full-service galley was installed in *Zumbrota*'s original deckhouse, and the remodeling of her lower deck removed most of her staterooms. Despite these changes the layout of circulation corridors and stairs between decks remain, as does the original engine room. *Zumbrota* also retains her pilothouse in its original form, with intact console, wheel and binnacle, and mahogany finishes. Most importantly, *Zumbrota*'s overall form, including her plumb bow, fantail stern, raised deck, and shallow draft, all features that were common of shallow draft luxury yachts in the early twentieth century, continue convey her historic significance and associations with pleasure yachting during the early twentieth century.

Zumbrota is nominated on behalf of Hornblower Cruises & Events, the owner of the vessel. No letters of support or objection were received for the nomination. Staff supports the nomination as written and recommends the State Historical Resources Commission determine that *Zumbrota* meets National Register Criterion C at the local level of significance with a period of significance of 1918, the year the yacht was constructed. Staff recommends the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register.

Jay Correia
October 5, 2016

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

1725 23rd Street Suite 100
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov



January 26, 2017

J. Paul Loether
Attention: Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service 2280
1201 I (Eye) Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Subject: **Zumbrota National Register of Historic Places Nomination**

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disc contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Zumbrota to the National Register of Historic Places. On October 28, 2016, at its regular quarterly meeting held in Redlands, the California State Historical Resources Commission found *Zumbrota* eligible for the National Register under Criterion C at the local level of significance. The period of significance is 1918, the year of construction.

Zumbrota's mahogany finishes, enclosed bridge, grand staterooms, and dramatic fantail stern, make her a particularly luxurious rendition of the shallow-draft yacht, befitting the wealth of her original owner, Charles Ringling of Ringling Bros. circus fame. Builder Charles Seabury was one of the country's largest and most prominent yacht builders in the years immediately following World War I.

Zumbrota is nominated on behalf of Hornblower Cruises & Events, the owner of the vessel. The Office of Historic Preservation received no letters of objection or support for the nomination. If you have questions please contact Jay Correia of my staff at 916-445-7008 or jay.correia@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Polanco", written over a horizontal line.

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures